

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

It is absurd that a media company can hijack what belongs to the community and is licensed by a government body to serve their own agenda. When I first heard this story I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe it is legal. I couldn't believe our current regulations could allow this. If regular TV networks owned and licensed by the community have the power to do this, we minus-well privatize the whole system, or go to a pure cable-based system. Let's just let anyone air whatever they want for that matter. You fine networks millions of dollars for airing a female breast, but you let something like this happen. How can americans have any faith in community-owned airwaves, that serve the interest of the community, when something like this is even possible?

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.